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BOADICIA.

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

DRURY-LANE.

By Mr. GLOVER.

The SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

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[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]

PROLOGUE.

TRAGEDY.

Spoken by Mr. Mossop.

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BESIDE his native Thames our poet long
Hath hung his ſilent harp, and huſh'd his ſong.
Kind Commerce whiſper'd "See my bliſsful ſtate,
"And to no ſmiles but mine reſign thy fate;
"Beneath the pregnant branches reſt awhile,
"Which by my culture ſpread this favour'd iſle;
"On that fair tree the fruits of ev'ry coaſt,
"All, which the Ganges and the Volga boaſt,
"All, which the ſun's luxuriant beam ſupplies,
"Or ſlowly ripens under frozen ſkies,
"In mix'd variety of growth ariſe.
"The copious leaves beneficence diffuſe,
"Which on affliction drops reſtoring dews,
"And birds of hope among the loaded ſprays
"Tune with enchantment their alluring lays
"To cheer deſpondence and th' inactive raiſe.
"Reſt here, ſhe cry'd, and ſmiling time again
"May ſtring thy lyre, and I approve the ſtrain."
At length his muſe from exile he recalls,
Urg'd by his patrons in Auguſta's walls.
Thoſe gen'rous traders, who alike ſuſtain
Their nation's glory on th' obedient main,
And bounteous raiſe affliction's drooping train;
They, who benignant to his toils afford
Their ſhelt'ring favour, have his muſe reſtor'd.
They in her future fame will juſtly ſhare,
But her diſgrace herſelf muſt ſingly bear;

Calm

PROLOGUE.

Calm hours of learned leisure they have giv'n,
And could no more, for genius is from heav'n.
To open now her long-hid roll she tries,
Where vary'd forms of pictur'd passions rise.
Revenge and pride their furies first unfold,
By artless virtue fatally controll'd.
Scenes, wrought with gentler pencils, then succeed,
Where love persuades a faithful wife to bleed;
Where, join'd to public cares, domestic woe
Is seen from manly fortitude to flow.
But if her colours mock the candid eye
By spurious tints, unmix'd with nature's dye,
Ye friendly hands, restrain your fruitless aid,
And with just censure let her labours fade.

Dramatis personæ.

DUMNORIX	*by* Mr. GARRICK.
TENANTIUS	Mr. BURTON.
EBRANCUS	Mr. MOZEEN.
FLAMINIUS	Mr. HAVARD.
ÆNOBARBUS	Mr. MOSSOP.
BOADICIA	Mrs. PRITCHARD.
VENUSIA	Mrs. CIBBER.

ROMAN AMBASSADOR, ICENIANS and TRINOBANTIANS.

SCENE, *the* British *camp before the tent of* Dumnorix.

BOADICIA.

ACT I.

SCENE *the Firſt.*

BOADICIA, DUMNORIX, ICENIANS, TRINOBANTIANS, *and* ROMAN *Ambaſſador.*

ROMAN *Ambaſſador.*

SUETONIUS, leader of the Roman arms,
With gentleſt greetings to th'Icenian queen,
And Dumnorix, the Trinobantian chief,
Sends health, and proffers friendſhip. Let the wrongs,
The mutual wrongs ſuſtain'd by Rome and Britain——

BOADICIA.

May ſtern Andate, war's victorious goddeſs,
Again reſign me to your impious rage,
If e'er I blot my ſuff'rings from remembrance;
If e'er relenting mercy cool my vengeance,
Till I have driv'n you to our utmoſt ſhores,
And caſt your legions on the crimſon'd beach.
Your coſtly dwellings ſhall be ſunk in aſhes,
Your fields be ravag'd, your aſpiring bulwarks

O'erturn'd and levell'd to the meaneſt ſhrub;
Your gaſping matrons, and your children's blood
With mingled ſtreams ſhall dye the Britiſh ſword;
Your captive warriors, victims at our altars,
Shall croud each temple's ſpacious round with death:
Elſe may each pow'r, to whom the Druids bend,
Annul my hopes of conqueſt and revenge!

DUMNORIX *to the Ambaſſador.*

You come to offer terms. Stand forth and anſwer.
Did not Praſutagus, her dying lord,
On your infatiate emperor beſtow
Half of his rich poſſeſſions, vainly deeming,
The reſt might paſs unpillag'd to his children?
What did you then, ye ſavage ſons of rapine?
You ſeiz'd the whole inheritance by force,
Laid waſte our cities, with the ſervile ſcourge
Diſgrac'd a royal matron; you deflow'r'd
Her ſpotleſs daughters, ſtole our nobleſt youth
To ſerve your pride and luxury in Rome;
Our prieſts you butcher'd, and our hoary elders,
Profan'd our altars, our religious groves,
And the baſe image of your Cæſar thruſt
Among the gods of Britain: and by heav'n,
Do you repair to theſe victorious tents
With proffer'd peace and friendſhip?

ROMAN *Ambaſſador.*

Yes, to treat,
As faith, benevolence and juſtice dictate.

DUMNORIX.

How ſhall we treat with thoſe, whoſe impious hands
Have rent the ſacred bands of mutual truſt?
How ſhall we treat with thoſe, whoſe ſtony hearts
Compaſſion cannot melt, nor ſhame controll,
Nor juſtice awe, nor piety reſtrain,
Nor kindneſs win, nor gratitude can bind?

ROMAN *Ambaſſador.*

Thou art a ſtranger to our gen'ral's virtues.

No

No pillager, like Catus, but a ſoldier,
To calm and ſober diſcipline inur'd
He would redreſs, not widen your complaints.

DUMNORIX.

Can he reſtore the violated maid
To her untainted purity and fame?
Can he perſuade inexorable death
To yield our ſlaughter'd elders from the grave?
No, nor by ſoothing tales elude our vengeance.

ROMAN *Ambaſſador*.

Yet hear us calmly, ere from yonder hills
You call the legions of imperial Rome,
And wake her eagles, which would ſleep in peace.

BOADICIA.

Begone, and bear defiance to your legions.
Tell them, I come, that Boadicia comes,
Fierce with her wrongs, and terrible in vengeance,
To roll her chariot o'er their firmeſt ranks,
To mix their ſoaring eagles with the duſt,
And ſpurn their pride beneath her horſes hoofs.

ROMAN *Ambaſſador*.

Then be prepar'd for war.

BOADICIA.

We are prepar'd.
Come from your hills, ye fugitive remains
Of ſhatter'd cohorts, by their fear preſerv'd.
Th' embattled nations of our peopled iſle,
Yet freſh from ſev'nty thouſand ſlaughter'd Romans,
Shall add yon refuſe to the purple heap:
And yet amid triumphant deſolation,
Though flames each Roman colony devour,
Though each diſtracted matron view her infant
Graſp with its tender hands the piercing ſpear,
Though your grey fathers to the falchion's edge
Each feeble head ſurrender, my revenge
Will pine unſated, and my greatneſs want
Redreſs proportion'd to a queen's diſgrace.

DUMNORIX.

Go, and report this anſwer to Suetonius.
Too long have parents ſighs, the cries of orphans,
And tears of widows, ſignaliz'd your ſway,
Since your ambitious Julius firſt advanc'd
His murd'rous ſtandard on our peaceful ſhores.
At length unfetter'd from his patient ſloth,
The Britiſh genius lifts his pond'rous hands
To hurl with ruin his collected wrath
For all the wrongs, a century hath borne,
In one black period on the Roman race.

ROMAN *Ambaſſador.*

Yet e're we part, your price of ranſom name
For the two captive Romans.

BOADICIA.

Not the wealth,
Which loads the palaces of ſumptuous Rome,
Shall bribe my fury. Hence, and tell your legions,
The hungry ravens, which inhabit round
The chalky cliffs of Albion, ſhall aſſemble
To feaſt upon the limbs of theſe your captains,
Shall riot in the gore of Roman chiefs,
Theſe Maſters of the World. Produce the pris'ners.
[*To an* Icenian.

SCENE *the Second.*

BOADICIA, DUMNORIX, ICENIANS, TRINOBANTIANS, ROMAN AMBASSADOR, ÆNOBARBUS *and* FLAMINIUS *in Chains.*

BOADICIA *to the Ambaſſador.*

Stay, if thou wilt, and ſee our victims fall.

ÆNOBARBUS *to* BOADICIA.

Dart not on me thy fiery eyes, barbarian.
Vain are thy efforts to diſmay a Roman.
Life is become unworthy of my care;

And

And theſe vile limbs, by galling chains diſhonour'd,
I give moſt freely to the wolves and thee.

ROMAN *Ambaſſador.*

Miſtaken queen, the Romans do not want
Theſe inſtigations, nor thy proud defiance
To meet your numbers in the vale below.

ÆNOBARBUS *to the Ambaſſador.*

Then wherefore do'ſt thou linger here in vain.
Commend us to Suetonius; bid him ſtreight
Arrange his conquering legions in the field,
There teach theſe raſh barbarians to repent
Of their diſdain, and wiſh for peace too late.

ROMAN *Ambaſſador to* ÆNOBARBUS *and* FLAMINIUS.

Yes, to Suetonius and the Roman camp
Theſe heavy commendations will we bear;
That for two gallant countrymen our love,
And indignation at their fate may ſharpen
Each weapon's point, and ſtrengthen ev'ry nerve,
Till humbled Britain have appeas'd their ſhades.

SCENE *the Third.*

BOADICIA, DUMNORIX, ICENIANS, TRINOBANTIANS, ÆNOBARBUS *and* FLAMINIUS.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Come, let us know our fate.

BOADICIA.

Prepare for Death.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Then ceaſe to loiter, ſavage.

DUMNORIX to ÆNOBARBUS.

Now by heav'n,
Wert thou no Roman, I could ſave and love thee.
That dauntleſs ſpirit in another breaſt,
And in a blameleſs cauſe were truly noble;
But ſhews in thee the murderer and ruffian.

ÆNO-

ÆNOBARBUS.

Thy hate, or favour are alike to me.

FLAMINIUS *to* DUMNORIX.

May I demand, illuſtrious Trinobantian,
Why muſt we fall, becauſe uncertain war
Hath made us captives.

DUMNORIX.

If in open battle
With gen'rous valour to have fac'd our arms
Were all our charge againſt thee, thou might'ſt reſt
Secure of life; but leading thee to die
Is execution on a gen'ral robber.

ÆNOBARBUS *to* FLAMINIUS.

And doſt thou meanly ſue to theſe barbarians?

FLAMINIUS *to* DUMNORIX.

Though our rapacious countrymen have drawn
Your juſt reſentment, we are guiltleſs both.

BOADICIA *to* FLAMINIUS.

So are ten thouſand infants, whom the name,
The ſingle name of Roman ſhall condemn,
Like thee, to periſh by th' unſparing ſword.

FLAMINIUS.

Yet more than guiltleſs, we may plead deſert
With Boadicia.

BOADICIA.

Inſolent pretenſion!
A Roman plead deſert with Boadicia!
This ſhall enlarge the portion of thy ſuff'rings;
For this not only ſhall thy blood embrue
Andate's ſhrine, but torture ſhall be added,
And fury wanton in thy various pains.

ÆNOBARBUS *to* BOADICIA.

Produce thy tortures, them and thee we ſcorn.

TENANTIUS *to the* TRINOBANTIANS.

Fall back with rev'rence, Trinobantian ſoldiers.
See, who advances from your gen'ral's tent.

SCENE *the Fourth.*

BOADICIA, DUMNORIX, ICENIANS, TRINOBANTIANS, ÆNOBARBUS, FLAMINIUS, *and* VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

Victorious ſiſter, may th' unreſting labour
Of fortune weave new honours to adorn thee,
And Dumnorix, thy colleague, and my lord;
But if amid theſe warlike conſultations,
Ere yet the order'd pomp of battle moves,
A ſupplicating ſound may reach thy ear,
Stoop from thy glory to an act of mercy,
Thy doom pronounc'd on theſe unhappy captives —

BOADICIA!

Ha!

VENUSIA.

Their deſervings, and thy daughter's pray'r,
Mix'd with my own compaſſion, from the tent
Have call'd me forth a ſuitor to thy pity,
That thou would'ſt hear and ſpare them.

BOADICIA.

Spare theſe captives?

DUMNORIX.

Why this requeſt, Venuſia?

VENUSIA.

Give them hearing.
They can unfold a ſtory, which demands
Your whole attention.

DUMNORIX,

Let us hear. Proceed. [*To* Flam.

FLAMINIUS.

The Romans' late injuſtice we abhorr'd,
Nor join'd the band of ſpoilers. In that ſeaſon
We chanc'd one day to wander through the foreſt,
Which parts our confines from th' Icenian land.

We

We found a beauteous virgin in our way.

BOADICIA.

Wretch, doſt thou hope to barter with our ſiſter
For thy baſe life?

FLAMINIUS.

I fear not death, O queen;
But dread diſhonour ev'n among my foes.

ÆNOBARBUS *to* FLAMINIUS.

Death is thy terrour; reaſon elſe would teach thee,
No gratitude with cruelty can dwell.

FLAMINIUS.

Deep in that wood we met the lovely maid,
Chac'd by a brutal ſoldier. At our threats
He ſoon retreated. To our home we led her,
From inſult guarded, ſent her back with honour,
Nor was ſhe leſs, than Boadicia's daughter.

VENUSIA.

Now, deareſt ſiſter, whoſe ſucceſsful ſtandard
Not valour more, than equity upholds;
And thou, my huſband, who doſt riſe in arms
Oppreſſive deeds in others to chaſtiſe;
From your own guiding juſtice will you ſtray,
And blend deſervers with the herd of guilt?

DUMNORIX.

And are you Romans? Yes, we will, Venuſia,
Repay their worthy deed. Strike off their fetters.

BOADICIA.

What do I hear? A Britiſh chief's command?
Whoe'er unchains a Roman, op mankind
Lets looſe oppreſſion, inſolence and rapine;
Sets treaſon, falſhood, vice and murder free.

VENUSIA.

Yet theſe preſerv'd thy Emmeline from ſhame.

BOADICIA.

Not leſs the victim of eternal ſhame,
Was ſhe conducted to their hateful manſion;
To guard her honour, and be leſs, than ruffians

Had

Had been repugnant to their name and race;
But fear of me compell'd them to releaſe her.
Then ſhall two Romans, nurs'd in fraud and falſhood,
From childhood train'd to each flagitious deed,
By colour'd pleas to ſhun the fate, they merit,
Here find regard againſt the thouſand mouths
Of Boadicia's ſuff'rings? No, this moment
Shall they expire in torture.

VENUSIA.

Yet reflect;
Of all the paths, which lead to human bliſs,
The moſt ſecure and grateful to our ſteps
With mercy and humanity is mark'd.
The ſweet-tongu'd rumour of a gracious deed
Can charm from hoſtile hands th' uplifted blade,
The gall of anger into milk transform,
And dreſs the brows of enmity in ſmiles.

BOADICIA.

Still doſt thou dare, Venuſia ——

DUMNORIX.

Gently, ſiſter.
And truſt me, theſe reſemble virtuous men.

BOADICIA.

Was not I virtuous, whom the Romans laſh'd?
Were not my violated children virtuous?
Bear them this inſtant to the fierceſt rack;
And while their trembling limbs are ſtrain'd with torture,
While through the cruel agony of pain
The bloody drops bedew their ſhiv'ring cheeks,
Tell them, how gentle are the pangs, they feel,
To thoſe, the ſoul of Boadicia prov'd,
When Roman rage her naked limbs expos'd,
And mark'd her fleſh with ever-during ſhame.

DUMNORIX *to the Britons.*

Withhold your hands.

BOADICIA.

What means the Trinobantian?

DUMNORIX.

To ſave thy benefactors and proclaim,
Whate'er by valour we extort from fortune,
We yet deſerve by juſtice.

BOADICIA.

To contend
With Boadicia, and protect her foes.
Did ſhe awaken thy ignoble ſloth,
Which elſe without reſentment of thy wrongs
Had ſlept obſcure at home.

DUMNORIX.

Forbear. Be calm.

BOADICIA.

Yes, under bondage thou hadſt tamely bow'd,
Had not I fir'd thy ſlow, inactive ſoul.

DUMNORIX.

Not with unbridled paſſion I confeſs,
I wield the ſword, and mount the warlike car.
With careful eyes I view'd our ſuff'ring iſle,
And meditated calmly to avenge her.
Unmov'd by rage, my ſoul maintains her purpoſe
Through one unalter'd courſe; and oft before
As I have guided thy unruly ſpirit,
Againſt its wildneſs will I now protect thee,
And from a baſe, inhuman action ſave thee.

BOADICIA.

Thy boaſted calmneſs is the child of fear;
Thou trembleſt to exaſperate the foe.
Well was it, Britons, in our former conqueſts,
That I preſided o'er the ſcene of ſlaughter;
Elſe had thoſe thouſands of the Roman youth,
Whoſe bodies lie extended on our fields,
Stood at this hour a threatning hoſt againſt you.
Come then, ye warriors, follow your conductreſs,
And drag theſe ſlaves to death.

DUMNORIX.

They will not move,
Fix'd with amazement at thy matchleſs frenzy.

Do thou revere theſe warriors, who with ſcorn
Obſerve thy folly.

VENUSIA.

Huſband, ſiſter, hear!
Oh! if my humbled voice, my proſtrate limbs,
If tears and ſighs of anguiſh may atone
For this pernicious diſcord, I have rais'd ——

BOADICIA *to* VENUSIA.

Hence with thy deſpicable ſighs and tears.
[*To* Dumnorix.
And, thou preſumptuous, what invidious power,
Foe to thy ſafety, animates thy pride
Still to contend with Boadicia's wrath?

DUMNORIX.

No, by Andate, I contend not with thee.
At this important ſeaſon, when the ſoldier
Thirſts for the conflict, it would ill become me
To trifle here in diſcord with a woman.
Nay do not ſwell that haughty breaſt in vain.
When once the ſacred evidence of juſtice
Illuminates my boſom, on a rock,
Which neither tears can ſoften, nor the guſts
Of paſſion move, my reſolution ſtands.

BOADICIA.

Now heav'n fulfil my curſes on thy head!
May ev'ry purpoſe of thy ſoul be fruſtrate!
May infamy and ruin overtake thee!
May baſe captivity and chains o'erwhelm thee!
May ſhameful crimſon from thy ſhoulders ſtart,
Like mine, diſhonour'd with the ſervile ſcourge!
With pain all ſhiv'ring, and thy fleſh contracting,
Low mayſt thou crouch beneath th' expected ſtroke,
Ev'n from the hands, thou ſav'ſt!

TENANTIUS.

Alas! great princeſs,
Divert this wrath againſt th' impending foe,
Whoſe formidable ranks will ſoon deſcend

From yonder hill.

BOADICIA *to the Britons.*

Ungrateful and perfidious!
Now would I draw my ſpirit from your camp,
Leave you with him defenceleſs and expos'd;
Then ſhould your ſhatter'd chariots be o'erthrown,
Your jav'lins broken, and in haſty flight
Far from your trembling hands the buckler caſt;
Did not th' inſatiate thirſt, which burns my ſoul,
To empty ev'ry vein of Roman blood,
Protect you, traitors, from my indignation:
But, by th' unſanguin'd altars of Andate,
Thou, Dumnorix, be ſure, ſhalt rue this day,
For thou henceforward art to me a Roman.

SCENE *the Fifth.*

DUMNORIX, VENUSIA, TENANTIUS, EBRANCUS, TRINOBANTIANS, ÆNOBARBUS *and* FLAMINIUS.

VENUSIA.

Oh! Dumnorix!

DUMNORIX,

Let not this frantic woman
Grieve thy mild nature—Romans, ceaſe to fear,
Theſe are my tents; retire in ſafety thither.

SCENE *the Sixth.*

DUMNORIX, VENUSIA, TENANTIUS, EBRANCUS *and* TRINOBANTIANS.

DUMNORIX *to* TENANTIUS.

Do thou go forth this inſtant, and command
Each ardent youth to gird his falchion round him,
His pond'rous ſpear to looſen from the turf,
And brace the target firmly on his arm.

His

His car let ev'ry charioteer prepare,
His warlike ſeat each combatant aſſume,
That ev'ry banner may in battle wave,
Ere the ſun reaches his meridian height.

SCENE *the ſeventh.*

DUMNORIX, VENUSIA, EBRANCUS *and* TRINOBANTIANS.

VENUSIA.

My lord and huſband!

DUMNORIX.

Wherefore doſt thou hold me,
And in my paſſage thy endearments plant?
I muſt prepare this moment to confront
The foul and ghaſtly face of cruel war;
And, by the gods, I rather court at preſent
That ſhape of horror, than thy beauteous form;
Then go, thou dear intruder, and remove
Thy ſoftneſs from me.

VENUSIA.

I will ſtay no longer,
Than brave Tenantius hath perform'd thy orders.
Long have I known thy valour ſkill'd to throw
The rapid dart, and lift th'unconquer'd ſhield.
A confidence, like this, hath ſtill diffus'd
Enough of firmneſs through my woman's heart
Ne'er to moleſt thee with a woman's fears,
This day excepted; now my weakneſs governs,
And terrour too importunate will ſpeak.
Haſt thou encounter'd yet ſuch mighty powers,
As down that mountain ſuddenly will ruſh;
From ev'ry part the Romans are aſſembled,
All vers'd in arms, and terrible in valour.

DUMNORIX.

Tell me, thou lovely coward, am not I

As terrible? or falls the Roman ſword
On the tough buckler, and the creſted helm
With deadlier weight, than mine? away and fear not;
Secure and calm, repoſe thee in thy tent;
Think on thy huſband, and believe, he conquers;
Amid the rage of battle he will think
On thee; for thee he draws the martial blade;
For thy lov'd infants gripes the pointed aſh.
Go, and expect me to return victorious;
Thy hand ſhall dreſs my wounds, and all be well.

VENUSIA.

Far better be our fortune, than for thee
To want that office from my faithful hand,
Or me to ſtain thy triumphs with my tears.

DUMNORIX.

Fear not. I tell thee, when thou ſeeſt my limbs
With duſt beſpread, my brows with glorious ſweat,
And ſome diſtinguiſh'd wound to grace my breaſt,
Thou in the fulneſs of thy love ſhalt view me,
And ſwear, I ſeem moſt comely in thy ſight.
Thy virtue then ſhall ſhew me worthier of thee,
Than did thy fondneſs on our nuptial day.

VENUSIA.

It ſhall be ſo, All wounded thou ſhalt find
My heart prepar'd to ſtifle its regret,
And ſmooth my forehead with obedient calmneſs.
Yet hear me further; ſomething will I offer
More, than the weak effects of female dread;
Thou go'ſt to fight in diſcord with thy colleague:
It is a thought, which multiplies my fears.

DUMNORIX.

Well urg'd, thou deareſt counſellor, who beſt
Canſt heal this miſchief. Let thy meekneſs try
The ſoft perſuaſion of a private conf'rence
To win from error a bewilder'd ſiſter,
While none are preſent to alarm her pride.

VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

I go, but trembling doubt my vain attempt;
Unleſs, commiſſion'd with thy dear injunctions,
My ſoul, exerted to perform thy pleaſure,
Could give perſuaſion all my force of duty.

SCENE *the eighth.*

DUMNORIX, EBRANCUS, TRINOBANTIANS, *and* TENANTIUS.

DUMNORIX.

Hark! we are ſummon'd.

TENANTIUS.

Ev'ry band is form'd.
The Romans too in cloſe arrangement ſtand.

DUMNORIX.

You, warriors, deſtin'd to begin the onſet,
My Trinobantians, it is time to ſeek
Th'embattled foe. And you, all-judging gods,
Look down benignant on a righteous cauſe!
Indeed we cannot give you, like the Romans,
A proud and ſumptuous off'ring; we abound not
In marble temples, or in ſplendid altars:
Yet though we want this vain, luxurious pomp,
Rough though we wander on the mountain's head,
Through the deep vale, and o'er the craggy rock,
We ſtill demand your favour; we can ſhew
Hands, which for juſtice draw th'avenging ſteel,
Firm hearts, and manners undebas'd by fraud.
To you, my dauntleſs friends, what need of words?
Your cities have been ſack'd, your children ſlain,
Your wives diſhonour'd; lo! on yonder hills
You ſee the ſpoilers; there the ruffians ſtand:
Your hands are arm'd; then follow, and revenge.

End of the firſt Act.

ACT II.

SCENE *the Firſt.*

FLAMINIUS *and* ÆNOBARBUS.

FLAMINIUS.

HO! Ænobarbus, thou mayſt now come forward.
What has thy angry ſoul been brooding o'er?

ÆNOBARBUS.

Well, thou haſt ſu'd, and haſt obtain'd thy ſuit;
Of theſe Barbarians meanly haſt implor'd
Thy wretched life, and haſt it. Muſt I thank thee
For this uncommon privilege to ſtand
A tame ſpectator of the Roman ſhame,
To ſee exulting ſavages o'erturn
Our walls and ramparts, ſee them with the ſpoils
Of our waſte dwellings, with our captive eagles
And ancient trophies, raviſh'd from our temples,
March in rude triumph o'er the gods of Rome?

FLAMINIUS.

What, thou hadſt rather die?

ÆNOBARBUS.

And thou hadſt rather
Live, like a dog, in chains, than die with courage,
Thou moſt unworthy of the Roman name.

FLAMINIUS.

Did thoſe, who now inhabit Rome, deſerve

The name of Romans? did the ancient ſpirit
Of our forefathers ſtill ſurvive among us,
I ſhould applaud this bold contempt of life.
Our anceſtors, who liv'd, while *Rome* was free,
Might well prefer a noble fate to chains;
They loſt a bleſſing, we have never known!
Born and inur'd to ſervitude at home,
We only change one maſter for another,
And Dumnorix is far beyond a Nero.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Meanſt thou to mock me?

FLAMINIUS.

No, I mean to ſhew,
Thy ſtern opinions ſuit not with the times.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Still by our valour we controll the world,
And in that duty will I match the foremoſt.
If our forefathers' manners be neglected,
Free from that blame, I ſingly will maintain them.
My ſentiments are moulded by my ſpirit,
Which wants thy pliant qualities to yield
With ev'ry guſt of fortune rude, or mild,
And crouch beneath example baſe, or worthy.

FLAMINIUS.

Well, if thou canſt not brook a Britiſh maſter—

ÆNOBARBUS.

No, nor thy wanton folly will I brook,
Which ſports alike with ſlavery, or freedom,
Inſenſible of ſhame.

FLAMINIUS.

Suppoſe, I free thee.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Free me?

FLAMINIUS.

This day, if fortune be propitious.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Ha! do not cheat me with deluſive fables,

And trifle with my bonds.

FLAMINIUS.

By all my hopes,
I do not trifle.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Wilt thou give my boſom
Once more to buckle on the ſoldier's harneſs,
And meet in battle our inſulting foes?
Shall my keen falchion gore the flying rout,
And raiſe a bleeding trophy to revenge
For each indignity, which Rome hath borne?
Hold me no longer in ſuſpence; inſtruct me,
From whence theſe hopes proceed.

FLAMINIUS.

Thou know'ſt, I lov'd
The Britiſh princeſs.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Haſt thou rais'd my hopes
To freedom, future victory and honour,
And doſt thou talk of love?

FLAMINIUS.

That love ſhall ſave us.
Thou ſaw'ſt, the gentle Emmeline but now
Stole to our tent, and gave her tend'reſt welcome.
Unchang'd I found her, ſoft and artleſs ſtill.
The gen'rous maid already hath ſuggeſted
The means of flight. The battle once begun,
While ev'ry Briton is intent on war,
Herſelf will guide us to a place of ſafety.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Now I commend thee.

FLAMINIUS.

Thou approv'ſt then.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Ay.

FLAMINIUS.

And ſee, the joyful moment is approaching;

Set,

See, where th'unnumber'd Trinobantians ſpread
In rude diſorder o'er the vale beneath,
Whoſe broad extent this eminence commands.
Mark their wide-waving multitude, confus'd
With mingling ſtandards, and tumultuous cars:
But far ſuperiour to the reſt behold,
The brave and gen'rous Dumnorix, erect
With eager hope, his lofty jav'lin ſhakes,
And with unpoliſh'd majeſty adorns
The front of war.

ÆNOBARBUS.

I mark the rabble well;
And ſoon ſhall view the Romans from their ſtation
Between thoſe woods, which ſhade the adverſe hills,
Sweep with reſiſtleſs ardour to the vale,
And trample o'er the ſavages, like duſt.

FLAMINIUS.

That ſmiling vale with pity I contemplate,
And wiſh, more gentle foot-ſteps might be ſeen
To preſs its verdure, and that ſofter notes,
Than war's terrific clamours, might be tun'd
From thoſe ſurrounding ſhades to join the murmurs
Of that fair channel, whoſe ſonorous bed
Receives the ſtream, deſcending from this grove
To form the limpid maze, which ſhines below.

ÆNOBARBUS.

I ſee it gliſt'ning in the noon-day ſun.
But Britiſh gore will change its glaſſy hue.

FLAMINIUS.

Oh! might we rather on its friendly banks
Erect a grateful monument to peace;
That ſhe, her ſway reſuming, might afford me
To claſp the gallant Dumnorix, and ſtyle him
My friend, my benefactor, and preſerver——
Stand from before this tempeſt, while it paſſes.

SCENE *the ſecond.*

BOADICIA, ICENIANS, ÆNOBARBUS *and* FLAMINIUS *at a diſtance.*

BOADICIA.

Oh! I could drive this jav'lin through my heart
To eaſe its tortures. Diſobey'd! Controll'd!
Ev'n in my army's ſight! Malignant pow'rs,
If ſuch there be, who o'er revenge preſide,
Who ſteel the breaſt with ever-during hate,
And aid black rancour in its purpos'd miſchief,
Be preſent now, and guide my indignation! [*pauſes*

The Trinobantians are advanc'd before me.
Let them ſuſtain the onſet; let the Romans
On Dumnorix with ev'ry cohort preſs,
Till he entreat for Boadicia's aid:
Then ſhall my eager eyes enjoy his ruin;
And when th'inſulting boaſter is o'erthrown,
His bands diſpers'd, or gaſping in the duſt,
Then will I ruſh exulting in my car,
Like fierce Andate, on the weary'd foe
Lead rout and ſlaughter, through a tide of gore
Impel my clotted wheels, redeem the day,
And from the mouth of danger ſnatching conqueſt,
Crown my revenge with glory.

SCENE *the third.*

BOADICIA, ICENIANS, ÆNOBARBUS *and* FLAMINIUS *at a diſtance, and* VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

Stand apart.
At my requeſt, Icenians. O unbend, [*To* Boad.
That

That louring brow, and hear a ſuppliant ſiſter!
So prone to errour is our mortal frame,
Time could not ſtep without a trace of horrour,
If wary nature on the human heart
Amid its wild variety of paſſions
Had not impreſs'd a ſoft and yielding ſenſe,
That, when offences give reſentment birth,
The kindly dews of penitence may raiſe
The ſeeds of mutual mercy and forgiveneſs.

BOADICIA.

Weak wretch, and yet whoſe impotence aſpires
To mix in warlike councils, and determine
The fate of captives, won in fields of death,
Thou wouldſt do better to reſerve thy tears;
Thou ſhallt have cauſe for penitential torrents.

VENUSIA.

They will not wait a ſecond birth of woe;
At thy ſeverity they burſt already.
Why turns on me that formidable aſpect,
Wont with commanding ſternneſs to behold
Its foes abaſh'd, and victory its vaſſal?
Yet how much brighter is the wreath of glory,
When interwove with clemency and juſtice?
Thou go'ſt to battle, there obtain renown;
But learn compaſſion from my tears, nor think,
Benignity enfeebles, or diſhonours
The moſt exalted valour.

BOADICIA.

Shall the tears
Of abject importunity detain me,
While vengeance, ſtriding from his griſly den,
With fell impatience grinds his iron teeth,
And waits my nod to ſatisfy his hunger?
Hence to th' employment of thy feeble diſtaff.

VENUSIA.

Not ſkill'd, like thee, in war's ennobling toils,
Inferiour praiſe, and humbler taſks I court,
And own my ſafety in thy loftier virtues;

Yet not like thee, with unforgiving wrath
Could I reſign a ſiſter to her grief
At this tremendous hour, ſo near deciding
The fate of both. One gentle word beſtow,
And I will leave thee with obedient haſte;
Nay I will ſeek the altars, and requeſt,
That in the future triumphs of this day
Heav'n may refuſe to Dumnorix a ſhare,
And give thee all.

BOADICIA.

Does Dumnorix conſent
To ſacrifice the Romans? art thou mute?
Still does he brave me? but your favour'd captives
Shall not eſcape. They ſoon ſhall join the victims,
Which this unconquer'd jav'lin ſhall reſerve
To ſolemnize the fall of Rome's dominion.
Then to my glory Dumnorix ſhall bend.
In ſight of Britain ſhall his baffled pride
The pomp of public ſacrifice behold,
Behold and pine. You take a band of ſoldiers,
To an Iceman.
Watch well around the Trinobantian tents,
And guard theſe Romans, as your lives. I tell thee,
To Venuſ.
Their gore ſhall yet beſmear Andate's altar.

VENUSIA.

In ſilent awe I heard thy firſt reſentment,
Yet hop'd, the well known accents of affection,
In kindneſs whiſper'd to thy ſecret ear,
Might to thy breaſt recal its exil'd pity,
That gentle inmate of a woman's heart.

BOADICIA.

Durſt thou, preſumptuous, entertain a thought
To give this boſom, nerv'd with manly ſtrength,
The weak ſenſations of a female ſpirit?

VENUSIA.

When I remind thy elevated ſoul,

That

That we by mutual int'reſts are but one,
And by th' indiſſoluble ties of birth,
Are thoſe ſenſations weak, which nature prompts?
With juſtice ſtrengthen'd, can her pow'rful voice
Find no perſuaſion?——

BOADICIA.

None. Provoke no more
With plaintive murmurs my indignant ear.
Thou, and thy huſband, authors of my ſhame
Before th'aſſembled chiefs, may reſt aſſur'd,
No pray'rs ſhall ſoften, no attonement bribe,
And no ſubmiſſion ſhall appeaſe the wrong.
May deſolation trample on my dwelling
A ſecond time, rapacious force again,
And inſult revel through my inmoſt chambers,
If I forgive you. Thou haſt food for anguiſh;
Go, and indulge its appetite at leiſure.

VENUSIA.

Yes, I will haſten to the holy ſhrine,
There wring my hands, and melt in copious ſorrow
Not for my injur'd ſelf, but thee remorſeleſs,
To mourn thy faded honours, which, deform'd
By harſh injuſtice to thy blameleſs friends,
Ne'er will revive in beauty. Not ſucceſs,
Not trophies riſing round thee; not the throng
Of circling captives, and their conquer'd ſtandards,
Nor glorious duſt of victory can hide
From juſt reproach thy unrelenting ſcorn,
While none deplore thee, but the wrong'd Venuſia.

SCENE *the fourth.*

BOADICIA, ICENIANS, ÆNOBARBUS *and* FLAMINIUS *at a diſtance.*

BOADICIA.

Stern pow'r of war, my patroneſs and guide,

To

To thee each captive Roman I devote.
Come then, vindictive goddeſs in thy terrours;
O'erwhelm with wrath his ſacrilegious head,
Who would defraud thy altars: O confound
His ranks, his ſteeds, his chariots, and thy favour
To me, thy martial votareſs, confine,
In ſex, like thee, and glowing with thy fires.

SCENE *the fifth.*

ÆNOBARBUS *and* FLAMINIUS.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Do thou come forward now, and ſay, what terrours
Has thy dejected ſoul been brooding o'er?
Yon furious dame, who fill'd thee ſo with dread,
Is marching onward. Raiſe thy head, and look;
See, where ev'n now with ſullen pride ſhe mounts
Her martial ſeat; yet wondrous ſlow, by heav'n,
Her car deſcends, nor ſoon will reach the vale.
Thou lookſt deſponding. Art thou ſtill diſmay'd?
Thinkſt thou, yon dreadful woman will return?
From us ſhe moves, though ſlowly; then take comfort.

FLAMINIUS.

Far other cares, than terrour, fill my breaſt.

ÆNOBARBUS.

What means this languor? Wherefore heaves that ſigh?

FLAMINIUS.

O Ænobarbus, willt thou bear my weakneſs;
I ſee the moment of deliv'rance near,
Yet pine with grief.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Whate'er the folly be,
With which thy boſom teems, the gods confound it.

FLAMINIUS.

To ſee the deareſt object of my ſoul,
Juſt ſee her after ſuch a tedious abſence.

Then

Then vaniſh from her ſight perhaps for ever,
When theſe reflections riſe, the ſweet exchange
From bonds to freedom, which to her I owe,
Is mix'd with bitterneſs, and joy ſubſides.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Why didſt thou leave the fair Italian fields,
Thou ſilken ſlave of Venus? what could move
Thee to explore theſe boiſt'rous northern climes,
And change yon radiant ſky for Britain's clouds?
What doſt thou here, effeminate? by heav'n,
Thou ſhouldſt have loiter'd in Campania's villas,
And in thy garden nurs'd with careful hands
The gaudy-veſted progeny of Flora;
Or indolently pac'd the pebbled ſhore,
And ey'd the beating of the Tuſcan wave
To waſte thy irkſome leiſure. Will thou tell me,
What thou doſt here in Britain? doſt thou come
To ſigh and pine? could Italy afford
No food for theſe weak paſſions? muſt thou traverſe
Such tracts of land, and viſit this cold region
To love and languiſh? anſwer me, what motive
Firſt brought thee hither? but forbear to urge,
It was in queſt of honour; for the god
Of war diſclaims thee.

FLAMINIUS.

Well, ſuppoſe, I anſwer,
That friendſhip drew me from the golden Tiber
With thee to combat this inclement ſky,
Will it offend thee?

ÆNOBARBUS.

No, I am thy friend,
And I will make a Roman of thee ſtill;
But let me ſee no languiſhing dejection
More on thy brow, nor hear unmanly ſighs.
Gods! canſt thou dream of love, When yonder ſee,
The Roman legions, all array'd for battle,
Are now deſcending; ſee their dreaded eagles,

Their dazzling helmets, and their crimſon plumes:
A grove of jav'lins glitters down the ſteep;
They point their terrours on th' aſtoniſh'd foe;
Soon will they charge the Britons in the vale,
And with th' auſpicious glories of this day
Enrich the annals of imperial Rome.
O curſt captivity! with double weight
I feel thee now! malicious fate! to ſuffer
A Roman thus to ſtand confin'd in bondage,
And ſee the triumphs, which he cannot ſhare.
By heav'n, Flaminius, I will never bear it.
Where is thy Briton? Will ſhe lead us hence?
Elſe, by the god of war, unarm'd I ruſh
To join the glorious ſcene, which opens there.

FLAMINIUS.

I ſee her coming, and will fly to meet her.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Our time is ſhort, remember; do not dally.

SCENE *the ſixth.*

ÆNOBARBUS.

I have a thought, lyes rip'ning in my breaſt,
And teems with future glory, if the fight
Prove undeciſive, and theſe tents ſubſiſt.
Soon will I bid thee, hoſtile camp, farewell.
Thou ſaw'ſt me come in thraldom; I depart
A fugitive: if ever I return,
Thou ſhallt receive me in another guiſe;
Then ſhallt thou feel me; when my ſhining helm
Shall ſtrike cold terrour through thy boldeſt guards,
And from its lofty creſt deſtruction ſhake.

End of the ſecond Act.

ACT III.

SCENE *the firſt.*

FLAMINIUS *and* ÆNOBARBUS.

FLAMINIUS.

OUR lovely guide attends us. Thy impatience
Hath call'd me loit'rer.

ÆNOBARBUS.

Thou mayſt loiter ſtill.
Thou canſt not haſten, nor retard our fate
Which is irrevocably fix'd.

FLAMINIUS.

What ſay'ſt thou?

ÆNOBARBUS.

I ſay, prepare to die. If Boadicia
Return once more, our deſtiny is fix'd.
Whate'er her mercileſs revenge may purpoſe,
Elate with conqueſt, or incens'd by loſs,
If on the rack to ſtrain our burſting ſinews,
If from the bleeding trunks to lop our limbs,
Or with ſlow fires protract the hours of pain,
We muſt abide it all. Collect thy ſpirit,
And, like a Roman, dauntleſs wait thy doom.

FLAMINIUS.

I hear thee, but thy meaning——

ÆNOBARBUS.

Hear again,
Before the tent ſome paces as I ſtood,
And joyful ſaw the Trinobantian guard,
Of us neglectful, from this quarter drawn
To view th'impending battle; on a ſudden
A curs'd Icenian caſt his jealous eye
Athwart my ſteps, then call'd a num'rous band,
Who prowl around us, as a deſtin'd prey.

FLAMINIUS.

Malicious fortune!

ÆNOBARBUS.

Now thou ſeeſt my meaning.

FLAMINIUS.

Our flight were vain, while theſe obſerve us.

ÆNOBARBUS.

True.
What has thy tame ſubmiſſion now avail'd,
Thy abject ſupplication to barbarians?
Hadſt thou with courage met thy fate at firſt,
We had been dead, ere now.

FLAMINIUS.

To view the ſun
Through his gay progreſs from the morn, till even,
Poſſeſs my friends, my parents, and my love
Within the circle of my native walls
Were joys, I deem'd well worthy of my care;
But ſince that care is fruitleſs, I can leave
This light, my friends, my parents, love, and country,
As little daunted at my fate, as thou,
Though not ſo unconcern'd.

ÆNOBARBUS.

O Mars and Veſta!
Is it a viſion, which you raiſe before me
To charm my eyes? Behold a ſcene, Flaminius,

To

To cheer a Roman in the gaſp of death.
The Britons are defeated; look, Flaminius;
Back from the vale in wild tumultuous flight
Behold their numbers ſweeping tow'rd the hill:
Already ſome are ſwarming up its ſide
To reach their camp for ſhelter; pale diſmay
With hoſtile rage purſue their broken rear,
While maſſacre, unchidden, cloys his famine,
And quaffs the blood of nations. O in vain
Doſt thou oppoſe thy boſom to the tide
Of war, and brandiſh that recover'd ſtandard;
Vain is thy animating voice to thoſe,
Whom fear makes deaf; O Dumnorix, thy toils
Are fruitleſs, Britain in the ſcale of fate
Yields to the weight of Rome. Now, life, farewell:
Shine on, bright Phœbus, thoſe, who reſt behind
To ſhare thy ſplendours, while I ſink in darkneſs,
Are far beneath my envy; I reſign
Theſe eyes with pleaſure to eternal ſhades,
They now have ſeen enough.

FLAMINIUS.

Whence this deſpair?
A blind confuſion fills the ſpacious camp.
Already conſternation hath diſpers'd
Our guard. Ev'n Dumnorix retires—He comes;
Avoid him——Truſt me, I am well inſtructed,
And will conduct thee to a ſafe retreat.

SCENE *the Second.*

DUMNORIX *with a ſtandard.*

Thou hard-kept remnant of our ſhatter'd fortune,
Stand there before the partial eye of heav'n,
Which has preferr'd the Romans' ſplendid altars,
To the plain virtue of a Britiſh heart.
Preſumptuous frenzy! Why is heav'n reproach'd?
O Boadicia, thou perfidious miſchief!

SCENE

SCENE *the Third.*

DUMNORIX *and* VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

Now let my duty o'er my fear prevail,
Fill my whole breaſt with tenderneſs, and heal
With ſweeteſt comfort thy diſtreſs.

DUMNORIX.

My wife!
Thou moſt unlike to yon degen'rate woman,
Her country's bane!

VENUSIA.

I tremble at thy words.

DUMNORIX.

Be not diſmay'd; the camp is ſtill our own.
Night is impending, and the Romans halt.

VENUSIA.

But what of Boadicia?

DUMNORIX.

Hear and mourn.
The Trinobantians ſcarce had fill'd the vale,
When from a narrow paſs between the woods
Forth burſt the Romans, wedg'd in deep array.
I found our ſtruggle vain, and ſent for aid
To Boadicia; ſhe with ſcorn reply'd,
I did not want th' aſſiſtance of a woman;
Nor left her ſtation, till my broken ranks
Were driv'n among th' Icenians: in a moment
All was confuſion, ſlaughter and defeat.

SCENE *the Fourth.*

DUMNORIX, VENUSIA, *and* BOADICIA.

DUMNORIX.

Gods! art thou ſafe?

VENUSIA.

Oh! moſt unhappy ſiſter!
When laſt we parted, cruel were thy words,
A ſure preſage of endleſs grief to me;
Yet my deſponding ſpirit ne'er foreboded,
That thou could'ſt deviate from a proſp'rous courſe,
When ev'ry gale conſpir'd to ſwell thy glory.

BOADICIA.

Throw not on me the crime of envious fortune.

DUMNORIX.

Doſt thou blame fortune, traitreſs?

BOADICIA.

Then the blame
Take on thy ſingle head.

DUMNORIX.

Avoid my ſight.

BOADICIA.

Thou ledſt the van.

DUMNORIX.

Avaunt.

BOADICIA.

Thou fledſt the firſt.
Now findſt too late th' importance of a woman.

DUMNORIX.

Too true I find a woman curs'd with pow'r
To blaſt a nation's welfare. Heav'nly rulers!
How have the Britons merited this ſhame?
Have we with fell ambition, like the Romans,
Unpeopled realms, and made the world a deſart?
Have we your works defac'd; or how deſerv'd
So large a meaſure of your bitt'reſt wrath,
That you ſhould cloath this ſpirit of a wolf
In human form, and blend her lot with ours?

BOADICIA.

Beſet with perils, as I am, purſu'd
By rout and havoc to th'encircl'ing toyl;
Untam'd by this reverſe, my lofty ſoul,

Up-

Upbraiding ſtill thy arrogance, demands,
Who ſpar'd the captive Romans? Who provok'd
My juſt reſentment? Who, in pow'r, in name
And dignity inferior, but elate
With blind preſumption, and by envy ſtung,
Dar'd to diſpute with me ſupreme command,
Then pale and trembling turn'd his back on danger?

VENUSIA.

O once united by the friendlieſt ties,
And leaders both of nations, ſhall this land
Still view its bulwarks, tott'ring with diſunion,
Enhance the public and their own misfortunes?
Thou, my complacent lord, wert wont to ſmooth
That manly front at pity's juſt complaint;
And, thou entruſted with a people's welfare,
A queen and warrior, let diſdain no more
Live in the midſt of danger — ſee Venuſia
Upon her knees ——

DUMNORIX.

Shall thy perfections kneel
To this ———

VENUSIA.

Oh! ſtop, nor give reſentment utt'rance
In ſuch a cauſe the proudeſt knee might ſue
To leſs, than Boadicia——Turn not from me!
[*To* Boadicia
Look on a proſtrate ſiſter; Think, thou hear'ſt
Our children's plaintive notes enforce my pray'r,
And Albion's genius mix his ſolemn moan;
That lamentations through thy ears reſound
From all the wives and mothers of thoſe thouſands,
Whoſe limbs lie ſtretch'd on yonder fields of death;
Thoſe wretched wives and mothers, oh! reflect,
But for the fatal diſcord of this day,
With other looks, with other cries and geſtures,
With diff'rent tranſports, and with diff'rent tears
Might

Might have receiv'd their ſons and huſbands home,
Than they will now ſurvey their pale remains,
Which there lye mangled by the Roman ſword
To feed the raven's hunger!—yet relent!
Yet let reſtoring union cloſe our wounds,
And to repair this ruin be thy praiſe!

DUMNORIX.

Riſe, riſe. Thy mildneſs, whoſe perſuaſive charm
No cruelty, but hers, could hear unmov'd,
In vain would render placable and wiſe
That malice, inhumanity and frenzy,
Which have already waſted ſuch a ſtore
Of glory and ſucceſs.

BOADICIA.

Oh!

DUMNORIX,

Doſt thou groan?

BOADICIA.

No, no, I do not feel a moment's pain.

DUMNORIX.

Thy words are falſe. Thy heart o'erflows with anguiſh;

BOADICIA.

No, I deſpiſe both thee and fortune ſtill.

DUMNORIX.

By heav'n, I know diſtraction rends thy ſoul,
And to its view preſents th' approaching ſcene
Of ſhame and torture, when th' indignant Romans
Exact a tenfold vengeance for their ſuff'rings;
And when thou paſſeſt through their ſtreets in chains,
The juſt deriſion of inſulting foes,
A frantic woman, who reſign'd her hopes,
And to indulge an empty pride betray'd
Her children, friends and country; then recal,
What once was Boadicia, fall'n how low
From all her honours, by her folly fall'n
From pow'r, from empire, victory and glory
To vileſt bonds, and ignominious ſtripes.

BOADICIA.

May curſes blaſt thee, worſe, than I can utter,
And keener pangs, than whips, or ſhackles ſeize thee!

VENUSIA.

Oh! ſiſter, how unſeemly is this rage?
Whom doſt thou load with theſe ungen'rous curſes?
Thy faithful friend, thy counſellour and brother,
Whom thou haſt injur'd, injur'd paſt the pow'r
Of reparation. Doſt thou call for whips
To print thoſe venerable limbs with ſhame,
For bonds to humble that majeſtic head,
Which foes themſelves muſt honour? yet, if chains
Muſt be our fate, what cruel hand hath forg'd them,
But thine alone? thy hand hath heap'd deſtruction
On him, thy once rever'd ally, on me,
On my poor children, guiltleſs of offence,
And on thy own, who claim'd protection from thee;
Yet thou obdurate, to thy rage a prey,
Doſt chide remorſe and pity from thy breaſt.

DUMNORIX *to* BOADICIA.

Source of thy own afflictions! to behold thee
Diſtracted thus, thus fall'n and loſt, to ſee
Thus ſtrongly painted on thy lab'ring features
The pangs, thou feel'ſt within, awakes compaſſion.

BOADICIA.

Ha! no——divine Andate ſhall uphold me
Above thy pity. Think'ſt thou, Boadicia
Is thus deſerted by her patron goddeſs,
Thus void of all reſources? think ſo ſtill,
And be deceiv'd. Ev'n now I feel her aid; [*aſide.*
I feel her here; the warlike queen inſpires
My pregnant ſoul; the mighty plan is forming;
It grows, it labours in my ardent boſom;
It ſprings to life, and calls for inſtant action;
Lead on, exert thee, goddeſs, till the furies,
Which heretofore have thunder'd at thy heels,
Start at the new-born horrours of this night.

SCENE

SCENE *the fifth.*

DUMNORIX *and* VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

Oh! Dumnorix, how virtue hath recoil'd
Upon itſelf! my interpoſing pity,
Thy manly firmneſs in a gen'rous act
Gave theſe diſaſters being.

DUMNORIX.

I forbid thee
To blame thy virtues, which the gods approve,
And I revere. Now leave me to concert
With our ſurviving chiefs the means of ſafety.

VENUSIA.

Oh! that, like me, compliant, at thy word
Peace a benign companion would attend,
And moderate thy cares, while I depart.

SCENE *the ſixth.*

DUMNORIX.

Have I been guilty? anſwer me, my heart,
Who now wouldſt burſt my agonizing breaſt,
Hath Dumnorix been guilty? willt thou, Britain,
To me impute the horrours of this day?
Perhaps a Roman's policy had yielded,
And to a colleague's cruelty and pride
Had ſacrific'd humanity and juſtice?
I did not ſo, and Albion is deſtroy'd.
Yet, O be witneſs, all ye gen'rous ſpirits,
So lately breathing in thoſe heaps of death,
That in this day's extremity and peril
Your Dumnorix was mindful of his charge;
My ſhiver'd javelin, my divided ſhield,
And blunted ſword, be witneſs for your maſter,

You were not idle in that dreadful hour:
Nor ev'n amid the carnage pil'd around me,
Will I relinquish my purſuit of hope——
Hope may elude me——For myſelf I fear not——
But my Venuſia——Ha! prepare, my ſoul——
There is thy ſtruggle, on her tender mind
To graft thy firmneſs, which can welcome death,
And hold it gain, when liberty is loſt.

End of the third Act.

ACT

ACT IV.

SCENE *the Firſt.*

DUMNORIX.

TILL good Tenantius, and the reſt return,
I have been led by ſolitary care
To yon dark branches, ſpreading o'er the brook,
Which murmurs through the camp; this mighty camp,
Where once two hundred thouſand ſons of war
With reſtleſs dins awak'd the midnight hour.
Now horrid ſtillneſs in the vacant tents
Sits undiſturb'd; and theſe inceſſant rills,
Whoſe pebbled channel breaks their ſhallow ſtream,
Fill with their melancholly ſound my ears,
As if I wander'd like a lonely hind,
O'er ſome dead fallow far from all reſort:
Unleſs that ever and anon a groan
Burſts from a ſoldier, pillow'd on his ſhield
In torment, or expiring with his wounds,
And turns my fix'd attention into horrour.
Venuſia comes——The hideous ſcene around me

Now

Now prompts the hard, but neceſſary duty.——
Yet how to name thee, death, without thy terrours!

SCENE *the ſecond.*

DUMNORIX *and* VENUSIA.

VENUSIA.

Thou didſt enjoin my abſence. I departed.
With ill-tim'd care if now returning——

DUMNORIX.

No.

VENUSIA.

Alas! deep-plung'd in ſadneſs ſtill I find thee.

DUMNORIX.

Doſt thou? come nearer. Thou haſt ſeen this day,
How thy perfidious, thy invet'rate ſiſter
Hath ſtain'd my glory, and my fortune baffled;
Thou haſt receiv'd me vanquiſh'd, who before
Was us'd to greet thee with the ſound of conqueſt.
Now tell me truly; am I ſtill the ſame
In my Venuſia's eyes?

VENUSIA.

What means my lord?

DUMNORIX.

Am I ſtill lov'd and honour'd, as before?

VENUSIA.

Canſt thou ſuſpect, that fortune rules my love?
Thy pow'r and honours may be ſnatch'd away,
Thy wide poſſeſſions paſs to other lords,
And frowning heav'n reſume, whate'er it gave,
All but my love, which ne'er ſhall know decay,
But ev'n in ruin ſhall augment its fondneſs.

DUMNORIX.

Then will my dictates be regarded ſtill.

VENUSIA.

Impart this moment thy rever'd commands,

And

And if it prove within my ſlender pow'r
To eaſe thy troubles, I will bleſs the gods,
And unrepining to our fate ſubmit.

DUMNORIX.

Think not, my own calamities diſtreſs me;
I can encounter fortune's utmoſt malice:
But oh! for thee, Venuſia——

VENUSIA.

Do not fear.
While in theſe faithful arms I hold my lord,
I never ſhall complain. Let ev'ry ill,
Let ruin and captivity o'ertake me,
With thee I will be happy.

DUMNORIX.

Ha! Venuſia!
Could thou and I find happineſs together,
Depriv'd of freedom? Doſt thou mark?

VENUSIA.

I do.

DUMNORIX.

Thou art moſt fair; but could thy lovely face
Make ſlavery look comely? Could the touch
Of that ſoft hand convey delight to mine
With ſervile fetters on?

VENUSIA.

Why doſt thou gaze
Thus ſtedfaſtly upon me?

DUMNORIX.

I would have thee
Reflect once more upon the loſs of freedom.

VENUSIA.

It is the heavieſt ſure of human woes.

DUMNORIX.

Learn one thing more, and though relentleſs heav'n
Its care withdraws from this ill-deſtin'd iſle,
Thou in the fall of nations ſhallt be ſafe.
Oh! heed Venuſia! never did thy welfare

Raiſe

Raiſe in my breaſt ſuch tender cares before;
Elſe from the public danger would I ſpare
Theſe precious moments to aſſiſt thy virtue.

VENUSIA.

Thou mak'ſt me all attention.

DUMNORIX.

Reach thy hand.
Now while I hold thee, do I bleſs Andate,
That this free hand, protected by my ſword,
Hath not yet known the ſhameful doom of bondage.

VENUSIA.

Nor ſhall I know it; thy unſhaken valour
Will be my ſafeguard ſtill.

DUMNORIX.

If fate confounds
My utmoſt efforts, can I then protect thee?

VENUSIA.

Why doſt thou lead me to deſpair? Why fill
My breaſt with terrours? Never did I ſee thee,
Till this ſad hour, thus hopeleſs and dejected.
Oh! how ſhall I, a woman weak and fearful,
Suſtain my portion of the gen'ral woe;
If thou, in perils exercis'd and war,
Doſt to ill fortune bow thy gallant ſpirit?

DUMNORIX.

Think not, Venuſia, I abandon hope.
No, on the verge of ruin will I ſtand,
And dauntleſs combat with our evil fate;
Nor, till its rancour bear me to the bottom,
My ſoul ſhall ever entertain deſpair:
But as the wiſeſt, and the beſt reſolv'd
Cannot controll the doubtful chance of war,
I would prepare thee for the worſt event.

VENUSIA.

Fly, where thou willt, my faithful ſteps ſhall follow
I can purſue thy courſe with naked feet,
Though roaming o'er the rough and pointed crags,

Or

Or through the pathleſs tract of deepeſt woods;
By thy dear hand ſupported, would I paſs
Through the cold ſnow, which hides the mountain's brow,
And o'er the frozen ſurface of the vale.

DUMNORIX.

Thou beſt of women, I believe thou wouldſt,
Believe, thy conſtant heart would teach thoſe limbs,
Thus ſoft and gentle, to ſupport all hardſhip,
And hold with me ſociety in toil.
But ſhould we want the wretched pow'r to fly,
What then?

VENUSIA.

What then?

DUMNORIX.

The Romans may ſurround us.

VENUSIA.

How wouldſt thou act in ſuch a dreadful ſeaſon!

DUMNORIX.

Ne'er ſhall the hands of Dumnorix endure
The ſhame of fetters; ne'er ſhall Rome behold
This breaſt, which honourable war hath ſeam'd,
Pant with the load of bondage: gen'rous wounds,
Ye deep engraven characters of glory,
Ye faithful monitors of Albion's cauſe,
Oft, when your midnight anguiſh hath rebuk'd
Oblivious ſlumber from my watchful pillow,
And in her danger kept my virtue waking:
You, when that office can avail no more,
Will look more graceful on my death-cold boſom,
Than to be ſhewn before the ſcoffing Romans,
Should they behold that Dumnorix in ſhackles,
Whom once they dreaded on the field of war.

VENUSIA.

Aſſiſt me heav'n!

DUMNORIX.

Speak out. I watch to hear thee.
My pow'rs are all ſuſpended with attention.

VENUSIA.

What ſhall I do?

DUMNORIX.

Explain thy thoughts.

VENUSIA.

I cannot.

DUMNORIX.

Why canſt thou not? Remember who thou art,
And who thy huſband is.

VENUSIA.

The firſt of men,
Join'd to the leaſt deſerving of her ſex.

DUMNORIX.

View thy own heart; be conſcious of thy merit;
And in its ſtrength confiding, be ſecure,
That thou art worthy of the greateſt man,
And not unequal to the nobleſt taſk.

VENUSIA.

O I will ſtruggle to aſſert that claim!
Yet deareſt lord, extend thy whole indulgence,
Nor undeſerving of thy love eſteem me,
While trembling thus.

DUMNORIX.

I know thy native ſoftneſs.
Yet wherefore doſt thou tremble? Speak, my love.

VENUSIA.

O I have not thy courage, not been us'd,
Like thee, to meet the dreadful ſhape of death;
I never felt the anguiſh of a wound;
Thy arm hath ſtill kept danger at a diſtance:
If now it threatens, and my heart no more
Muſt treat with ſafety, it is new to me.

DUMNORIX.

It is, my love. My tenderneſs implies
No expectation, that thy gentle mind
Should be at once familiariz'd with fate.
Not inſurmountable I hold our danger.

But to provide againſt deluſive fortune,
That thou mayſt bear, unterrify'd, the lot,
Which beſt ſhall ſuit thy dignity and name,
Demands thy care: take counſel of thy virtue.

VENUSIA.

I will.

DUMNORIX.

And arm thy breaſt with reſolution.

VENUSIA.

Indeed I will, and aſk the gracious gods
To fill my heart with conſtancy and ſpirit,
And ſhew me worthy of a man, like thee,
Perhaps their ſuccour, thy rever'd injunction,
And high example may controll my terrours;
But oh! what pow'r ſhall ſooth another care,
Than life more precious, and a keener pang,
Than death's ſevereſt agony, relieve;
The ſad remembrance of my helpleſs infants,
Our love's dear pledges, who before me riſe
In orphan woe, defenceleſs and forſaken,
And all my borrow'd fortitude diſſolve.

DUMNORIX.

Thou perfect pattern of maternal fondneſs,
And conjugal compliance, reſt aſſur'd,
That care was never abſent from my ſoul.
Confide in me; thy children ſhall be ſafe.

VENUSIA.

How ſafe?

DUMNORIX.

Shall live in ſafety. Thou ſhallt know.
Mean time retire. Our anxious chiefs, return'd,
Wait my commands, and midnight is advancing.

SCENE *the third.*

DUMNORIX.

She goes——her love and duty will ſurmount

This hideous taſk—O morning bright in hope,
Clos'd by a night of horrour, which reduces
This poor——dear woman, yet in blooming years,
Bleſs'd in her huſband, in her offspring bleſs'd,
Perhaps to cut her ſtem of being ſhort
With her own tender hand———If ever tears
Might ſort with valour, nor debaſe a ſoldier,
It would be now——Ha! whither do I plunge?

SCENE *the fourth.*

DUMNORIX, EBRANCUS, TENANTIUS *and* TRINOBANTIANS.

DUMNORIX.

Well, my brave friends, what tidings?

EBRANCUS.

Through thy quarter
With weary ſteps, and mourning, have we travers'd
A ſilent deſart of unpeopled tents
Quite to the diſtant ſtation of th' Icenians.
Their chiefs we found in council round their queen;
The multitude was arming: twenty thouſand
Were yet remaining, and unhurt by war,
Unlike our Trinobantians, who, unaided,
The fatal onſet bore. Thoſe huge battalions,
Which Rome ſo dreaded, are alas! no more.

DUMNORIX.

Be not dejected. Far the greater part
Are fled for ſhelter to their native roofs,
And will rejoin us, when with force repair'd
We may diſpute our iſland ſtill with Rome.
But have you gain'd acceſs to Boadicia?

EBRANCUS.

We have.

DUMNORIX,

What ſaid ſhe?

EBRAN-

EBRANCUS.

She approv'd thy counſel.

DUMNORIX.

You told her then my purpoſe to retreat
Through yonder foreſt.

EBRANCUS.

To herſelf alone
We told it.

DUMNORIX.

I commend you. You have ſav'd us
A conference, both needleſs and unpleaſing.

EBRANCUS.

She further bade us note, how all th' Icenians
Were then in arms, and ready to advance.

DUMNORIX.

Return, and tell her, (let thy phraſe, Ebrancus,
Be ſoft and humble) e're two hours be waſted,
We muſt begin our march. Do you explore [*To the other* Trinobantians.
The ſecret paſſage, and with winged haſte
Bring back your tidings. Thou, Tenantius, wait.

SCENE *the fifth.*

DUMNORIX *and* TENANTIUS.

DUMNORIX.

To thee my inmoſt boſom I muſt open,
And to thy friendſhip truſt my tend'reſt cares.
Thou muſt purſue thy journey (heed me well)
Quite through the foreſt— Doſt thou know the paſs?

TENANTIUS.

Yes, where thoſe guſhing waters leave the grove
To ſeek the valley, deeper in the ſhade
From the ſame fountain flows a ſmaller brook,
Whoſe ſecret channel through the thicket winds
And will conduct me farther down the vale——

DUM-

DUMNORIX.

Which once attain'd, proceed and gain my dwelling.
Give me thy honeſt hand. ——Come nearer, ſoldier,
Thy faithful boſom would I claſp to mine—
Perhaps thy general and thou may never
Embrace again.

TENANTIUS.

What means my fearleſs chief?
Why haſt thou call'd this unaccuſtom'd moiſture
Into thy ſoldier's eyes!

DUMNORIX.

Thou doſt not weep,
My gallant vet'ran —— I have been to blame.
A tenderneſs reſulting from a care,
Which ſtruggles here, ſubdu'd me for a moment.
This ſhall be ſoon diſcharg'd, and all be well.
I have two boys——If after all my efforts
(I ſpeak not prompted by deſpair, but caution)
Rome ſhould prevail againſt me, and our hopes
Abortive fall, thou take theſe helpleſs infants;
With thee tranſport them to our northern frontier,
And hide them deep in Caledonian woods.
There in their growing years excite and cheriſh
The dear remembrance of their native fields;
That, to redeem them from th' Italian ſpoiler
If e'er ſome kind occaſion ſhould invite,
Forth from their covert they may ſpring undaunted.
Ne'er let the race of Dumnorix divert
One thought from Albion to their own repoſe.
Remind them often of their father's toils,
Whom thou leav'ſt grappling to the laſt with fortune.
And if beneath this iſland's mould'ring ſtate
I to avoid diſgraceful chains muſt ſink,
Fain would my ſpirit in the hope depart,
That on the ruins, which ſurround my fall,
A new-born ſtructure may hereafter ſtand,
Rais'd by my virtue, living in my ſons.

End of the fourth Act.

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE *the firſt.*

VENUSIA.

A Hollow ſound of tumult ſtrikes my ear;
Perhaps the howl of ſome night-roaming wolves,
Who, wak'd by hunger, from their gloomy haunts
Are trooping forth to make their fell repaſt
On my freſh-bleeding countrymen, whoſe limbs
O'erſpread the valley. Shall I mourn your fall,
Loſt friends, who, couch'd in death, forget your cares,
I, who may ſhortly join your ghaſtly band,
Unleſs that foreſt yield its promis'd aid?
O hope, ſweet flatt'rer, whoſe deluſive touch
Sheds on afflicted minds the balm of comfort,
Relieves the load of poverty, ſuſtains
The captive, bending with the weight of bonds,
And ſmooths the pillow of diſeaſe and pain,
Send back th' exploring meſſenger with joy,
And let me hail thee from that friendly grove.

SCENE

SCENE *the ſecond.*

VENUSIA *and* DUMNORIX.

DUMNORIX.

Why haſt thou left thy couch?

VENUSIA.

I heard a ſound,
Like tumult at a diſtance.

DUMNORIX.

So did I,
As near the op'ning paſs I ſtood to watch
Our meſſenger's return.

SCENE *the third.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX *and* EBRANCUS.

DUMNORIX *to* EBRANCUS.

What means this haſte?
Why lookſt thou pale?

EBRANCUS.

With thy inſtructions charg'd,
I ſought th' Icenian quarter. All around
Was ſolitude and ſilence. When I call'd,
No voice reply'd. To Boadicia's tent
With fearful haſte I trod. Her daughters there
I found in conſternation. I enquir'd
The cauſe, they anſwer'd only with their tears;
Till from the princeſs Emmeline at laſt
I learn'd, that all th' Icenians were that hour
In ſilent march departed; but their courſe
She could not tell me: that her furious mother
Had with a fell, determin'd look enjoin'd them
To wait her pleaſure, which ſhould ſoon be known;
Mean time to reſt immoveable and mute.

SCENE

SCENE *the fourth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, EBRANCUS, *and an* ICENIAN *carrying a bowl.*

VENUSIA.

My Dumnorix, defend me.

DUMNORIX.

Ha! what means
This wild demeanour—willt thou ſpeak, Icenian?—
Fear not my love; thy Dumnorix is near.
What is that bowl, thou carry'ſt?

ICENIAN.

Honour'd chief,
If ought appears diſorder'd in my geſture,
Which ill becomes the reverence, I owe thee,
Charge that demerit to my horrid errand,
And not to me.

VENUSIA.

What will befal us now!

DUMNORIX *to the* ICENIAN.

Willt thou begin?

ICENIAN.

I come from Boadicia.

DUMNORIX.

Where is ſhe?

ICENIAN.

Far advanc'd o'er yonder vale;

DUMNORIX.

With what intention?

ICENIAN.

To aſſail the Romans.

DUMNORIX.

Aſſail the Romans?

ICENIAN.

To ſurprize their camp
At this dead hour with unexpected ſlaughter.

Before ſhe march'd, to me this ſecret charge
In words, like theſe, ſhe gave. "Obſerve our courſe;
"When I have paſs'd the camp's extremeſt verge
"Back to my daughters and Venuſia ſpeed:
"Tell them, I go our fortune to reſtore,
"If unſucceſsful never to return.
"Should that ſtern doom attend me, bid them take
"The laſt, beſt gift, which dying I can leave them;
"That of my blood no part may prove diſhonour'd.
"The Trinobantian, of his Roman friends
"So well deſerving, may accept their grace."
This ſaid with wild emotion in her breaſt,
Her viſage black'ning with deſpair and horrour,
She ſtreight committed to my trembling hands
Two fatal bowls, which flow with poiſon'd ſtreams.
I have accompliſh'd half my horrid taſk
With Boadicia's daughters.

DUMNORIX.

Frantic woman!
Who hopes with fury and deſpair to match
The vigilance and conduct of Suetonius.

ICENIAN.

From this ill-fated hand receive the draught,
Whoſe hue and odour warrant it the juice
Of that benumbing plant, the Druids gather;
That plant, whoſe drowſy moiſture lulls the ſenſe,
And with a ſilent influence expels
The unreſiſting ſpirit from her ſeat.

DUMNORIX.

Miſtaken woman! did ſhe deem Venuſia
Was unprovided of this friendly potion—
Perform thy orders; bear it to my tent —
Thou mayſt not want it yet — take comfort, love.

SCENE

SCENE *the fifth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, EBRANCUS, *and a ſecond* ICENIAN.

Second ICENIAN.

Oh! Dumnorix.

DUMNORIX.

Icenian, ſpare thy voice.
Thy flight, thy terrour, and thy wounds interpret
Too plainly.

Second ICENIAN.

We are vanquiſh'd.

DUMNORIX.

I believe thee.

Second ICENIAN.

Oh! I have much to tell thee——but I faint.

DUMNORIX *to* EBRANCUS.

Conduct him hence, and learn the whole event.

SCENE *the ſixth.*

VENUSIA *and* DUMNORIX.

VENUSIA.

On you, celeſtial arbiters, we call.
Now as we ſtand environ'd by diſtreſs,
Now weigh our actions paſt, deform'd, or fair,
If e'er oppreſſion hath defil'd his valour,
In help and pity to the woes of others
Our hearts been ſcanty, and our hands reſerv'd,
Let our tranſgreſſions ratify our doom:
Elſe with your juſtice let our merits plead
To hold its ſhield before us, and repel
Theſe undeſerv'd misfortunes.

DUMNORIX.

Heav'n may hear,
And through that foreſt lead us ſtill to ſafety.
Ha! no; each pow'r againſt us is combin'd;
What but their anger, levell'd at our heads,
Could bring Tenantius back, ſo ſtrictly charg'd
To ſeek our home—The intercepting foes
Have ſeiz'd the ſecret paſs.

VENUSIA.

Whoſe guardian care
Now to the gloomy ſhelter of a deſart,
To ſolitary innocence and peace
Will guide our friendleſs orphans?

DUMNORIX.

True, Venuſia.
Through ev'ry trial heav'n is pleas'd to lead us.
Droop not—one comfort never can forſake us.
The mind, to virtue train'd, in ev'ry ſtate
Rejoicing, grieving, dying, muſt poſſeſs
Th' exalted pleaſure to exert that virtue.

SCENE *the ſeventh.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX *and* TENANTIUS.

VENUSIA.

Speak, ſpeak, Tenantius.

TENANTIUS.

We purſu'd our courſe,
But had not travell'd far, before we heard
The ſound of footſteps, daſhing through the brook,
Whoſe winding channel marks the ſecret way.
Not long we ſtood in wonder, ere a troop
Of Romans ſally'd forth, and made us captives.

DUMNORIX.

Why then farewell to what was left of hope.

TENANTIUS.

Not ſo, my lord. VE-

VENUSIA.

Speak; what reſource is left?

TENANTIUS.

We were conducted to the Roman leaders,
One fierce and haughty, gentler far the other,
Who calm'd his ſtern companion, gave us comfort,
Nam'd thee with rev'rence, then an earneſt zeal
Diſcloſing for thy ſafety, and requeſting
A ſhort, but friendly conference between you,
With courteſy diſmiſs'd us.

VENUSIA.

Is he near?

TENANTIUS.

Hard by he waits impatient for an anſwer,
Juſt where the paſs is open to the tent.

DUMNORIX.

What would the Roman?

VENUSIA.

Haſten back Tenantius,
And ſay, that Dumnorix conſents to parley.

DUMNORIX.

Ha! truſt our freedom in a Roman's pow'r?

TENANTIUS.

Unarm'd and ſingle will the Roman join thee.

DUMNORIX.

O ineffectual effort!

VENUSIA.

Only ſee him.
If but to parley for thy children's ſafety.
Weak, as I am, unequal to theſe conflicts,
I would embrace deſtruction, ere requeſt thee
Once to comply with ought below thy greatneſs.

DUMNORIX.

Let him approach.

SCENE

SCENE *the eighth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX *and* EBRANCUS.

DUMNORIX.

What haſt thou learnt, my ſoldier?

EBRANCUS.

Like ours, th' Icenian force is all deſtroy'd.

DUMNORIX.

And Boadicia?

EBRANCUS.

Nought of her I know,
But that ſhe found the Roman hoſt embattled,
Which ſhe had fondly deem'd immers'd in ſleep.

DUMNORIX.

And ſo is fall'n a victim to her folly.
Retire.

SCENE *the ninth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX, TENANTIUS *and* FLAMINIUS.

TENANTIUS *to* FLAMINIUS.

Thy helmet, caſt aſide, reſtores thee
To my remembrance, Lo! thy benefactors.

FLAMINIUS.

Brave Dumnorix!

DUMNORIX.

My captive!

FLAMINIUS.

Yes, Flaminius,
Who owes to thy humanity his life.

DUMNORIX.

Where haſt thou hid thee from my notice, rather
Whence now return'ſt, ennobled with command,

No

No more in thraldom, but a Roman leader?

FLAMINIUS.

Amid the tumult of your late defeat
We ſought th' adjacent foreſt; thence we paſs'd
The vale below, and reach'd the Roman tents.

DUMNORIX.

And now are maſters of our late retreat.——
Had I been cruel, Britain had been ſafe.

FLAMINIUS.

Was this an act unworthy of a ſoldier?

DUMNORIX.

Our woes are all the progeny of folly,
Not charg'd to thee or fortune.

VENUSIA.

Heav'n well pleas'd
Perhaps ordain'd this unforeſeen event,
That our benevolence to brave Flaminius
Its due return of gratitude ſhould find.

FLAMINIUS.

The life, you gave me, to your mutual welfare
I here devote. My influence, my pow'r,
My thoughts, my care to ſoften your afflictions,
Shall all combine. Surrender to your friend,
Before Suetonius with his legions pours
On your defenceleſs camp, who long in arms
Hath ſtood, expecting the appointed ſignal,
Which he enjoin'd us with the dawn to rear.

DUMNORIX.

Though thou didſt well, accepting life from me,
That gift from thee muſt Dumnorix refuſe.

FLAMINIUS.

Thou willt not rob my gratitude of pow'r
To ſhew, how well thy goodneſs was beſtow'd.

DUMNORIX.

Thou canſt not ſhew it. If thou ſav'ſt my life,
Canſt thou from bonds protect me and a triumph?

FLA-

FLAMINIUS.

Alas! I cannot.

DUMNORIX.

Wouldſt thou ſee me led
A ſullen captive, and through haughty Rome
Inglorious count my paces to the clink
Of my own chains! this faithful woman too——

VENUSIA.

Like thee, diſdains a being ſo preſerv'd.

FLAMINIUS.

O let me water with my tears your feet!
If ev'ry drop, which iſſues from my heart,
Could from the doom, you juſtly ſcorn, ſecure you,
Before you now the purple ſluice ſhould open.
Yet let my knees in humbleſt adoration
Before ſuch elevated virtue bend.
O godlike Britons, my acknowledg'd patrons
And benefactors, if my ſoul retain not
Your memory for ever dear and ſacred;
May diſappointment, poverty and ſhame
Deform my life, and pining ſickneſs cloſe
My youthful eyes untimely in the grave.

DUMNORIX.

Thou ſeem'ſt of all the Romans to poſſeſs
A heart, which feels for others. Riſe and hear.
Though we reject the wretched boon of life,
Thou may'ſt, Flaminius, yet repay our bounty.

FLAMINIUS.

Then will I aſk no other grace from heav'n.

DUMNORIX.

We have two children.

VENUSIA.

O my bleeding heart!
My poor, deſerted infants, whom theſe arms
No more muſt cheriſh, nor my lulling voice
Huſh in the quiet of my ſheltring boſom!

DUM-

DUMNORIX *aſide.*

Yet ſhall not this unman me. I will feel
A father's anguiſh, but conceal the pain.
[*To* Flam.
Know then, I meant this faithful friend, Tenantius,
Should traverſe yonder wood to reach my dwelling,
Which lyes remote, and thence convey my ſons
Far from theſe borders to extremeſt north,
Where they might reſt ſecure, nor ſhare the ills,
Doom'd to their parents. Willt thou let him paſs?

FLAMINIUS.

I will, and Jove be witneſs to my word.

DUMNORIX.

Give thy laſt charge, Venuſia, to Tenantius.
One word apart with thee, my Roman friend.
As thou art gen'rous, anſwer me with truth.
When muſt thou make thy ſignal?

FLAMINIUS.

At the dawn,
Whoſe beams, though faint, already tinge the eaſt.

DUMNORIX.

What time will bring your legions near this tent?

FLAMINIUS.

An hour at fartheſt.

DUMNORIX.

I have heard, Flaminius,
Of your forefathers' ſpirit, how they fell
Oft on their ſwords to ſhun ignoble bondage;
This part have we to act: and, friendly Roman,
When thou ſhallt ſee our cold remains — my own
Are little worth attention —— Oh! remember
Venuſia's goodneſs, and her gentle clay
Defend from ſhame and inſult.

FLAMINIUS.

Thou doſt pierce
My heart——I cannot anſwer——but believe
Theſe tears ſincere.

DUMNORIX.

Enough. Perform thy promiſe.
Thy obligations will be then diſcharg'd.
Farewel. Fulfil thy gen'ral's commands.

SCENE *the tenth.*

VENUSIA, DUMNORIX *and* TENANTIUS.

VENUSIA *to* TENANTIUS.

Thou future parent of my orphan babes,
Soon as their gen'rous minds imbibe thy precepts,
And thy example warms their budding virtues,
Do not forget to tell them, that no perils,
Nor death in all its terrours can efface
Maternal love; that their ill-fated mother
Amid this awful ſeaſon of diſtreſs
Wept, but for them, and loſt her fears in fondneſs.

DUMNORIX.

We have been long companions, brave Tenantius,
Thy leader I, once fortunate and great,
And thou my faithful and intrepid ſoldier.
Nay, do not weep —— we have not time for wailing.
By thy approv'd fidelity and love,
Thy chief, juſt ent'ring death's unfolded gates,
Stops, and once more conjures thee to retain
This his laſt charge in memory —— his children.

SCENE *the eleventh.*

VENUSIA *and* DUMNORIX.

DUMNORIX.

The ſun is ris'n. All hail! thou laſt of days
To this nigh-finiſh'd being. Radiant pow'r,
Thou through thy endleſs journey mayſt proclaim,
That Dumnorix dy'd free, for thou ſhallt view it.

Behold

Behold th' appointed ſignal from the grove,
Juſt as Flaminius warn'd us, is uprear'd
To call Suetonius, and his legions on.
Come, deſolation, tyranny reſort
To thy new ſeat; come, ſlavery, and bend
The neck of Albion, all her ſons debaſe,
And ancient virtue from their hearts expel.
Now then, ye honour'd manſions of our fathers,
Ye hallow'd altars, and ye awful groves,
The habitation of our gods, farewel!
And yet the guilty auth'reſs of theſe woes
Deſerves a ſhare of praiſe, who, ſtill retaining
One unextinguiſh'd ſpark of gen'rous honour,
Scorn'd to remain ſpectatreſs, or partaker
Of Albion's fall, and, dying, ſtill is free.
Need I ſay more, Venuſia?

VENUSIA.

Oh! my lord.

DUMNORIX.

Why heaves that ſigh?

VENUSIA.

Alas! I am a woman.

DUMNORIX.

True, a defenceleſs woman, and expos'd
To keener ſorrow by thy matchleſs beauty;
That charm, which captivates the victor's eye,
Yet helpleſs to withſtand his ſavage force,
Throws wretched woman under double ruin.
But wherefore this? Thy virtue knows its duty.

VENUSIA.

Stay but a little.

DUMNORIX. *aſide.*

Would I might for years!
But die that thought —— Falſe tenderneſs, away.
Thou Britiſh genius, who art now retiring
From this loſt region, yet ſuſpend thy flight;
And in this conflict lend me all thy ſpirit ——

We only aſk thee to be free and die.
Well, my Venuſia; is thy ſoul reſolv'd?
Or ſhall I ſtill afford a longer pauſe?

VENUSIA.

Though my weak ſex by nature is not arm'd
With fortitude, like thine, of this be ſure;
That dear ſubjection to thy honour'd will,
Which hath my life directed, ev'n in death
Shall not forſake me; and thy faithful wife
Shall with obedience meet thy laſt commands.
But canſt thou tell me; is it hard to die?

DUMNORIX.

Oh! rather aſk me, if to live in ſhame,
Captivity and ſorrow be not hard?

VENUSIA.

Oh! miſerable!

DUMNORIX.

In a foreign land
The painful toils of ſervitude to bear
From an imperious miſtreſs?

VENUSIA.

Dreadful thought!

DUMNORIX.

Or be inſulted with the hateful love
Of ſome proud maſter?

VENUSIA.

Oh! proceed
No further!

DUMNORIX.

From thy native ſeat of dwelling,
From all the known endearments of thy home,
From parents, children, friends and ---- husband torn.

VENUSIA.

Stop there, and reach the potion; nor to drink
The cure of troubles will I longer pauſe.

SCENE

SCENE *the twelfth.*

VENUSIA.

For ev'ry paſs'd poſſeſſion of delight,
Both in my offspring, and their god-like ſire,
A dying matron bends her grateful knee,
Ye all-diſpoſing pow'rs! as now theſe bleſſings
Muſt reach their period, to my ſons transfer
That copious goodneſs, I have ſhar'd ſo long!
Through my reſigning ſoul that promiſe breathe,
And my laſt moments comfort thus with peace!

SCENE *the thirteenth.*

VENUSIA *and* DUMNORIX *with a bowl.*

DUMNORIX *aſide, ſeeing* Venuſia *on her knees.*
Hold, reſolution; now be doubly arm'd
[*He gives her the bowl and ſhe drinks.*
Now ſtand awhile before the fanning breeze.
So with its ſubtle energy the potion,
Leſs rudely ſtealing on the pow'rs of life,
Will beſt perform its office to remove
Pain, fear and grief for ever from thy breaſt.
How doſt thou fare, Venuſia?

VENUSIA.

I perceive
No alteration. Every ſenſe remains
Yet unimpair'd. Then while theſe moments laſt,
Let me on thee direct my eyes to gaze,
While unobſtructed ſtill their ſight endures;
Let me receive thee to my faithful boſom,
Before my heart is motionleſs and cold:
Speak to me, Dumnorix! my lord! my huſband!
Give one kind accent to thy dying wife,
Ere yet my ears be frozen, and thy voice

Be

Be heard no longer; join thy lip to mine,
While I can feel thy laſt and tend'reſt kiſſes.

DUMNORIX.

Yes, I will utter to thy dying ear,
All my fond heart, ſuſtain thee on my boſom,
And cheer thy parting ſpirit in its flight.
Oh! whereſoe'er thy fleeting breath ſhall paſs,
Whate'er new body, as the Druids ſing,
Thou ſhallt inform hereafter, ſtill thy ſoul,
Thou gentle, kind, and ever-pleaſing creature,
Shall bear its own felicity along,
Still in its native ſweetneſs ſhall be bleſs'd,
And in its virtue, which can thus ſubdue
The fear of death, ſtill brave the pow'r of fortune.
But thou beginſt to droop.

VENUSIA.

My eyes grow dizzy.

DUMNORIX *aſide.*

Keep firm, my heart.

VENUSIA.

A heavineſs, like ſleep,
O'ercomes my ſenſes —— Every limb is faint ——
Thy voice is ſcarce diſtinguiſh'd in my ears.

DUMNORIX.

Indeed!

VENUSIA.

Alas! thou lookſt ſo kindly on me!
My weak, and darken'd ſight deceives me ſure,
Or thy fond eye did never yet o'erflow
With tenderneſs, like this.

DUMNORIX.

I never view'd thee
For the laſt time.

VENUSIA.

Look, look upon me ſtill.——
Why doſt thou turn thy face away?

DUM-

DUMNORIX.

For nothing.

VENUSIA.

Nay, thou art weeping, Dumnorix---and wherefore
Wouldſt thou conceal thy tears?

DUMNORIX.

I cannot hide them.

VENUSIA.

And doſt thou weep?

DUMNORIX.

I do.

VENUSIA.

Then didſt thou love me
With ſuch exceſs of fondneſs?----For Venuſia
Do theſe ſoft ſtreams bedew that awful face?

DUMNORIX.

Love thee! Behold, when Albion groans around me,
Yet thou theſe ſprings of tenderneſs canſt open
To wet the cheeks of Britiſh Dumnorix.

VENUSIA.

Oh! extacy! which ſtops my parting ſoul,
And gives it vigour to enjoy theſe tranſports.——
Once more receive me to thy breaſt.

DUMNORIX.

Venuſia!

VENUSIA.

Thy tenderneſs makes death delightful to me ———
Oh! I would ſpeak — would anſwer to thy kindneſs —
My fault'ring tongue ——

DUMNORIX.

What ſayſt thou?

VENUSIA.

Ceaſe to grieve ——
No pain moleſts me —— every thought is calm ——
Support my drowſy burthen to that couch ——
Where death — ſerenely ſmiles.

SCENE

SCENE *the fourteenth.*

FLAMINIUS *ſpeaking to the Romans behind the ſcene.*

My warlike friends
Keep back —— our troops on ev'ry ſide advance.
I cannot long controll them. Yet I tremble
To enter there—By heav'n he lives, and ſees me.

SCENE *the fifteenth.*

FLAMINIUS *and* DUMNORIX *with his ſword drawn.*

DUMNORIX.

Importunate Flaminius! Art thou come
To rob my dying moments of their quiet?

FLAMINIUS.

Forgive the crime of ignorance——Forgive,
Since accident hath join'd us once again,
If ſtrong compaſſion at thy fate yet pleads——

DUMNORIX.

What, when Venuſia is no more?

FLAMINIUS.

No more?

DUMNORIX.

No; and be further leſſon'd by a Briton,
Who ſince his union with the beſt of women
Hath never known an interval from love,
And at this ſolemn pauſe yet melts in fondneſs:
While death's black curtain ſhrouds my cold Venuſia,
Of dearer value doth my ſoul eſteem her,
Than ſhould thoſe eyes rekindle into luſtre,
And ev'ry charm revive with double pow'r
Of winning beauty, if alone to ſhine
Amid the gloom of bondage.

FLAMINIUS.

I will urge
No more——farewel——our legions hover nigh.

SCENE *the ſixteenth.*

DUMNORIX.

Now in my breaſt reſume thy wonted ſeat,
Thou manly firmneſs, which ſo oft has borne me
Through ev'ry toil and danger. O return,
Riſe o'er my ſorrow, and compleat thy laſt,
Thy higheſt taſk, to cloſe a life of glory——
They come——Be ſwift, my ſword——By thee to fall,
Near that dear clay extended, beſt becomes
A ſoldier's courage, and a huſband's love.

SCENE *the laſt.*

ÆNOBARBUS, FLAMINIUS *and* ROMANS.

ÆNOBARBUS.

To Boadicia's quarter I advanc'd
At thy requeſt, who ſince her laſt defeat,
Blind with deſpair and diſappointed fury,
Fled to her tent; expiring there I found her
With one ill-fated daughter, both by poiſon:
Nor had the friendly Emmeline eſcap'd,
But by the ſwift prevention of my hand.
Doſt thou not thank me, whoſe ſuggeſtion prompted
Our quick return to ſeize the ſecret paſs?
Thou gav'ſt me freedom; love and fame repay thee.

FLAMINIUS.

If thou couldſt add, that Dumnorix ſurviv'd?

ÆNOBARBUS *looking into the tent.*

Thou ſeeſt, the Gods have otherwiſe decreed.
Forbear to mingle vain regret with conqueſt.
He hath done nobly. Fair befal his urn.

Death is his triumph, which a captive life
Had forfeited to Rome, with all the praiſe,
Now from the virtuous to his aſhes due.

FLAMINIUS.

Then art thou fall'n at laſt, thou mighty tow'r,
And more than Roman edifice of glory?
See too Venuſia, pale in death's embrace,
Preſents her faded beauties. Lovely ruin!
Of ev'ry grace and virtue once the ſeat,
The laſt kind office from my hand receive,
Which ſhall unite thee to thy huſband's ſide,
And to one grave your mingling reliques truſt.
There ſoon a hallow'd monument ſhall riſe,
Inſculptur'd laurel with the myrtle twin'd,
The well-wrought ſtone adorning, ſhall proclaim
His gen'rous valour, and thy faithful love.

End of the laſt act.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. HAVARD.

NOW we have ſhewn the fatal fruits of ſtrife,
A hero bleeding with a virtuous wife,
A field of war embru'd with nations' gore,
Which to the duſt the hopes of Albion bore,
If weak deſcription, and the languid flow
Of ſtrains unequal to this theme of woe
Have fail'd to move the ſympathyzing breaſt,
And no ſoft eyes their melting ſenſe expreſt;
Not all the wit this after ſcene might ſhare,
Can give ſucceſs, where you refus'd a tear;
Much leſs, if haply ſtill the poet's art
Hath ſtol'n perſuaſive to the feeling heart,
Will he with fancy's wanton hand efface
From gen'rous minds compaſſion's pleaſing trace,
Nor from their thoughts, while penſive they purſue
This maze of ſorrow, ſnatch the moral clue:
If yet to him thoſe pow'rs of ſacred ſong
To melt the heart, and raiſe the mind, belong.
Dar'd he to hope, this ſketch of early youth
Might ſtand th'award of nature and of truth,
Encourag'd thus, hereafter might he ſoar
With double ſtrength, and loftier ſcenes explore,
And, following fortune through her various wiles,
Shew ſtruggling virtue, dreſs'd in tears, or ſmiles;
Perhaps his grateful labours would requite
With frequent off'rings one propitious night.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. HAVARD.

NOW we have seen the fatal fruits of strife,
A hero bleeding with a virtuous wife,
A field of war embrun'd with nations' gore,
Which to the dust the hopes of Albion bore,
Of weak description, and the languid flow
Of strains unequal to this theme of woe.
Have fail'd to move the sympathizing breast,
And no soft eyes their melting sense express;
Not all the wit this after scene might spare,
Can give success, where you refus'd a tear;
Much less, if haply fill the peer's art
Both fill'd a persuasive to the [illegible] heart.
Will he with fancy's [illegible]
From gen'rous minds [illegible] trace,
Nor from their thought [illegible] they pursue
This mine of sorrow, [illegible] cine:
If yet to him those powers of sacred song
To melt the heart, and raise the mind, belong.
Dar'd be to hope, this sketch of early youth
Might stand to award of nature and of truth,
Encouring'd thus, hereafter might be soar
With double strength, and higher scenes explore.
And, too, [illegible] fortune through her [illegible],
Sheep struggling virtue, [illegible] in tears, or smiles;
Perhaps [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
With [illegible] off [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].